

Poems by GEORGE SANTAYANA

George Santayana was born in Spain, educated in Boston and taught at Harvard before returning to Europe to spend the last forty years of his life writing. He is primarily known as a philosopher, his five-volume *The Life of Reason* being his *magnus opus*. But he also wrote a successful novel, *The Last Puritan*, as well as plays, essays and poetry. During his time at Harvard he influenced many of his student including T.S. Eliot and Robert Frost.

Of these poems which he chose to collect together in this volume he says, "What I felt when I composed those verses could not have been rendered in any other form. Their sincerity is absolute, not only in respect to the thought which might be abstracted from them and expressed in prose, but also in respect to the aura of literary and religious associations which envelops them. . . . In one sense I think that my verses, mental and thin as their texture may be, represent a true inspiration, a true docility. . . . For as to the subject of these poems, it is simply my philosophy in the making." (From the Preface)

The collection consists of fifty sonnets, a few odes and a selection of miscellaneous poems. The volume concludes with an essay about Santayana by poet and literary critic Edmund Gosse who says of Santayana's poetry, "Only in solitude can soliloquies be appreciated, and Mr. Santayana is not an author for loud streets..." Summary by Larry Wilson.

Total running time: 02:39:37



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